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Topics:

- Ukraine – European Union
- Foreign and Defense Policy of Ukraine
- The course of the Russian-Ukrainian war



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(15.10 – 31.10.2022)

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■ *THEME ANALYSIS: Steinmeier's enlightenment*



*Photo: President of the Federal Republic of Germany during his trip to Chernihiv region
Source: Ukrinform*

The question of rebuilding Ukraine arose in the early stages of the Russian full-scale invasion, when it became clear that Russia would not achieve the goal of a "successful" blitzkrieg with the capture of Kyiv. This idea received its continuation and conceptualization. Several forums on the reconstruction of Ukraine have already been held, in particular in The Hague, Lugano and Berlin. In contrast to the issue of arms assistance, which is coordinated within the specially created coalition "Rammstein", in the issue of economic assistance and reconstruction, systematic coordination has not yet taken place. Ideas are still being heard, individual initiatives are being proposed and implemented by individual partners: the USA, Great Britain, within the EU and the G7. Now Germany has taken the initiative at the Berlin forum which was announced in the summer.

After the full-scale invasion, Germany faced devastating criticism for its passive and aloof policy from Ukraine and other partners, especially Poland. In response, Germany even published a list of all aid provided to demonstrate the extent of its involvement. Despite the criticism, in economic terms, the state is indeed one of the leaders in aid to Ukraine. Nevertheless, the country is the leader of the European Union, and therefore Berlin is expected to take even more decisive steps in the matter of aid and countering Russian aggression. German politicians are beginning to realize this and, as President Steinmeier noted in his recent speech, "Germans will have to get used to the fact that a country like

Germany will be criticized... We are one of the largest states in Europe. Therefore, we are expected to lead in the interests of Europe."

It is worth noting that *criticism of Germany is more than justified*. The country's government provided aid with a long delay at a time when Ukraine most needed military aid. Yes, the bureaucratic mechanism in such a stable democracy as Germany can delay processes, however, this has not become a problem for countries such as Great Britain or the USA. Germany is one of the largest financial donors to Ukraine, and economic aid is a direction where the German government and society do not need to overcome the sentiments associated with the provision of weapons. Here, it is easier for Germany to show leadership, which is needed not only by Ukraine, but also by the EU leader, because Berlin's position affects the perception of the country by its allies.

At the forum in Berlin, Olaf Scholz ambitiously stated that *Ukraine needs a new Marshall Plan*. At the same time, the chancellor links the reconstruction of Ukraine with Ukraine's potential membership in the EU, which is an important signal for Ukraine. *First of all*, the position of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding the reconstruction of Ukraine, the readiness of the state to actively participate in this process, is fixed. *Secondly*, Berlin has again confirmed the change in its position regarding future EU membership. Previously, the state was considered a supporter of the accession of the Balkan countries and a skeptic of Ukrainian European integration.

At the forum in Berlin, a fundamental decision was made to create a Financial Coordination Platform. According to Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, this is actually a financial analogue of the security Rammstein. The platform will operate in the format of meetings of representatives of Ukraine, the EU, G7 countries and international financial organizations. Currently, the G7 is chaired by Germany.

In addition to economic support, Germany intends to continue and, quite possibly, increase its military aid. As of October 25, Germany's military aid amounted to 1.48 billion euros.¹ At a conference in Berlin, Olaf Scholz emphasized Germany's desire to continue supplying Ukraine with weapons, including air defense systems, as long as they are needed. "The best reconstruction is the one that shouldn't happen at all, because Ukrainian cities and power plants are protected from Russian bombs, drones and missiles." The first such system, Iris-T already protects the sky over Kyiv. The efficiency of this installation is really high, Iris-T, according to Denys Shmyhal, shoots down 9 out of 10 missiles. In the future, Ukraine will receive 3 more such complexes. However, Germany still does not supply Leopard tanks and Marder BMPs to Ukraine. After all, in the future, within a few months, Vladimir Putin will mobilize several hundreds of thousands of Russian military personnel. Indeed, newly formed units will have relatively low morale and training. However, the number is a factor that already restrains the offensive actions of the Defense Forces of Ukraine. Therefore, Ukraine's partners, especially a country like Germany, need to finally change their approach to the Russian-Ukrainian war and not to wait for the situation at the front to deteriorate, but to supply the latest weapons today.

¹ The Federal Government, Military support for Ukraine,
URL: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/military-support-ukraine-2054992>

It is worth noting several positive aspects that embody optimism regarding further German-Ukrainian cooperation. First, German Foreign Minister Annalena Berbock and Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht demand from Finance Minister Christian Lindner to provide more money for military support to Ukraine for 2023: 2.2 billion euros, instead of the planned 697 million. Second, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who previously advocated peace on Russian terms, in his address to the nation acknowledged the mistakes of the past and tried to prepare German society for serious changes in the policy of Germany.

He noted that difficult years are coming, an era is beginning for Germany, in which Germans must bravely face the headwinds. Steinmeier's rhetoric has evolved. The German president is no longer talking about pacifying the aggressor, because even Russia's liberal partners, after all the crimes of the Russian army and the destruction of the Ukrainian energy system, began to understand that it is impossible to come to an agreement with Putin. "We must learn to resolve conflicts, both internal and external. We need the will to assert ourselves, as well as the strength to accept sacrifices at times. What we need is not a mindset of war, but resilience and a spirit of resistance. This includes, first of all, a strong and well-equipped armed forces, the Bundeswehr... I assure our partners that Germany is aware of its responsibility in NATO and in the EU... German society needs a strong Bundeswehr - but the Bundeswehr also needs a society that supports it!"² - the President of Germany said.

Frank Walter Steinmeier calls for German leadership, moves away from the neoliberal paradigm and looks at international relations from the perspective of realism. He directly speaks about the confrontation with the Russian Federation, a country that until now had a positive image among certain layer of the population: "When we look at today's Russia, there is no place for old dreams. Now our countries are opposing each other... What Russia is doing is an attack on everything that we Germans stand for. The one who shrugs his shoulders and asks, "What does this war have to do with us Germans?" - has neither a sense of responsibility nor a sense of history. Therefore, we support Ukraine and will do so as long as necessary."

Such processes, the change in the rhetoric of German high-ranking officials are definitely favorable developments for Ukraine. They testify to changes in the perception of the elites of the Federal Republic of Germany of the processes taking place on the continent in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This creates confidence in the continuation of cooperation between Ukraine and Germany in the context of military and economic support. Walter Steinmeier's speech, which took place after a trip to Ukraine and several hours in a shelter in Chernihiv Oblast, is a signal to the German people that should influence the worldview of Germans in the face of drastic changes on the European continent and in the world as a whole. It is likely that it will also affect Steinmeier's fellow party member, the current chancellor, Olaf Scholz. Thus, **at an important moment of the Russian-Ukrainian war before the beginning of winter, a consensus is being formed in Germany regarding further support for Ukraine, however, the question of increasing military aid and the transfer of equipment necessary for the liberation of the entire territory of Ukraine remains.**

² "Для Німеччини це нова епоха": історична промова Штайнмаєра про війну та зміну ставлення до РФ, 28.10.2022, URL: <https://www.euointegration.com.ua/articles/2022/10/28/7149599/>

■ *THEME ANALYSIS: Iran as an accomplice in the Russian genocide of Ukrainians*



*Photo: Meeting of the presidents of Iran and Russia in July 2022
Source: Deutsche Welle*

Cooperation between Iran and Russia has been going on for many years. Under the conditions of international sanctions, Iran was a sales market for the Russian military-industrial complex. In addition, there was cooperation between the states in the missile industry and in the field of nuclear energy, in particular, the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Iran stepped forward to further deepen relations with the Russian Federation and **actually acted as a situational ally of the aggressor state**. In the face of decreasing Russian military superiority due to the supply of Western technological weapons to Ukraine, Tehran is massively supplying Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6 drones. This weapon provided the Russian Federation with the capability to increase the number of strikes on Ukrainian cities and use the drones provided to them both on the battlefield and for strikes on civilian infrastructure. Thus, Iran became an accomplice in the aggression against Ukraine, along with Russia and Belarus, which gives Russian Federation its territory for aggression.

In October, the Washington Post, citing US and allied security officials, reported Iran's intention to supply Russia with short- and medium-range ballistic missiles.¹ This information was subsequently confirmed by the Defence intelligence of Ukraine. According to Yury Ignat, a representative of the Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Russia has agreed not only on supply of 2,400 drones from Iran, but also of ballistic missiles.² The ballistic missiles that Russia plans to acquire from Iran are similar to the Russian Iskander missiles. We are talking about "Fateh-110" and "Zolfaghar".

In such circumstances, the question arises of increasing the price of such actions for the theocratic state. Ukraine's partners: The United States, namely the Biden administration, France, Great Britain and Germany tried to keep the Iranian nuclear agreement alive. In accordance with the agreement, Western countries lift a number of sanctions, and Iran fulfills obligations that limit the country's ability to create nuclear weapons. However, the only effective response to Iran's actions towards support of Russia is the imposition of severe economic and technological sanctions, since personal sanctions will be extremely limited and will not affect the actions of the state.

Partner countries: France, Germany and Great Britain have already reacted to Iran's actions by supporting Ukraine's call for a UN investigation into the use of drones of Iranian origin. In response, the countries received threats: "The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in its pursuit to protect its national interest and to secure the rights of the noble Iranian people, reserves the right to respond to any irresponsible action," the Iranian foreign ministry website quoted Nasser Kanaani, spokesperson for Iran's foreign ministry as saying. It will not hesitate to defend the interests of the Iranian people," he said. Soon after, information appeared in the media about Iran's readiness to strike targets in Saudi Arabia with drones and ballistic missiles. The intelligence of Saudi Arabia also found out that another target of Iran could be Iraq, namely Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan.

During this same period, North Korea, against the background of joint US-South Korean military exercises, fired hundreds of artillery shells into the sea and said that it was an imitation of strikes on the forces of the two countries.³ The same North Korea, according to the spokesman of the US National Security Council, John Kirby, supplies Russia with artillery shells.⁴

Currently, **an axis of autocratic states has formed around the Russian Federation, which want to change the existing world order in the fight against democratic countries.** With the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the increased involvement of Ukraine's

¹ Іран планує постачати Росії балістичні ракети малої та середньої дальності – WP, 16.10.2022, URL: <https://mil.in.ua/uk/news/iran-planuye-postachaty-rosiyi-balistychni-rakety-maloyi-ta-serednoyi-dalnosti-wp/>

² Олена Рошціна, Росія домовилася про балістичні ракети з Іраном і продумала шлях для них – ГУР, 07.10.2022, URL: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2022/11/7/7375314/>

³ КНДР заявила, що запуски ракет були імітацією ударів по США та Південній Кореї, 07.10.2022, URL: <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2022/11/7/7150123/>

⁴ Білий дім: Північна Корея таємно доставляє артилерію до Росії, 02.10.2022, URL: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-rosia-pivnichna-korea/32112583.html>

partners, these states are more inclined to help the Russian Federation. One of the reasons is there is actually no price for such actions. Therefore, it is necessary to put pressure on the partners of the Russian Federation within international organizations and impose sanctions on them. First of all, this concerns Iran, whose drones are destroying the Ukrainian energy system and killing Ukrainian citizens. Because of such massive strikes, about 40% of the Ukrainian energy system was damaged.

Increasing confrontation on several fronts at once could become a problem for the US and the North Atlantic Alliance. In particular, Iran may try to complete the creation of nuclear weapons. In this case, the allies will have to strike Iran, which will lead to the formation of a second theater of hostilities. In this context, it is worth mentioning the position of Israel. ***Israel, unexpectedly for many in Ukraine, took a neutral, partially pro-Russian position.*** With the beginning of the war, unlike the citizens of their country, the government stayed away, even banned Ukrainians from entering. Subsequently, the state began to provide more non-military support and strengthened intelligence cooperation, but still avoids selling Ukraine the necessary weapons, citing the influence of the Russian Federation in the Middle East and possible anti-Israel measures on the part of Russia in case of cooperation with Ukraine. However, the attempt to remain aside is unlikely to end in success, as ***the Russian-Ukrainian war is escalating and becoming global.***

China also monitors the balance of power. For a long time, the state was considered an actor supporting the existing world order, which allowed it to become a global player. However, in recent years, the rhetoric of the Chinese leadership regarding Taiwan has become more militant, and the position regarding Russian aggression is ambiguous. **If the US and its partner countries are unable to stop Russia in Europe, it is likely that Iran and the PRC will try to take advantage of the opportunity and expand their influence in their regions, including through military means.**

Iran must be punished for its participation in the Russian genocide of Ukrainians. All potential members of the anti-Western coalition must understand that attempts to undermine the positions of the US and partner countries will have the price. As noted by the retired American general Ben Hodges, the task of the United States and its partners is to understand why Iran agreed to provide weapons to Russia under the threat of disruption of the nuclear agreement and the imposition of sanctions. It is quite likely that **Russia agreed to support Tehran's nuclear program**, although previously Moscow opposed acquisition of nuclear status by Iran. Western intelligence should expose it. And if it is so, sanctions should be extended to the nuclear industry of the Russian Federation, in particular to the Rosatom company. Ben Hodges also noted that it is important to expose the ways of weapons supply and destroy these weapons on their way to Russia. But, in the case of continuing the transportation of drones, there should be explosions at the relevant Iranian factories, and car accidents with people participating in this process, in particular, with Iranian equipment in Crimea.

Ukraine currently does not have the ability to shoot down ballistic missiles. And therefore, it needs air defense and missile defense systems capable of shooting down Iranian missiles and drones. The pressure on the aggressor countries needs to be increased, because

with the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war, more and more countries that want to change the existing world order are supporting Russia. The US and NATO partners will not be able to stand aside, as the conflict is expanding and becoming global. After threats from Iran, Saudi Arabia, which refused to limit oil production and help Ukraine's partners, felt its vulnerability. This case should be indicative for states that hope to remain neutral in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The existing world order may be is not pefect, the alternative, however, is a global conflict of democracies and partners against the modern Axis of Evil: the Russian Federation and the states that support it, in particular Belarus, Iran, the DPRK and, potentially, the PRC. **More rapid consolidation around the United States and the "Rammstein Coalition" led by them will contribute to the acceleration of the victory over the aggressors,** the return to a more stable system of international relations, in which every state has opportunities to develop, while its right to sovereignty, territorial integrity and existence is unquestionable.



Source: Army FM

■ *Changes at the front*

In the second half of October, active combat actions took place along the entire front line.

In the Luhansk direction, the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) attacked in the direction of Svatove and tried to advance on Kreminna. However, the strengthening of Russian troops by recently mobilized Russian citizens allowed them to stop the offensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in this direction and to counterattack on Ukrainian positions.

On the Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Novopavlivske directions, the occupiers tried to attack. According to Serhiy Cherevaty, a representative of the Eastern Group of Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the invaders lose about 100 soldiers per day near Bakhmut and Avdiivka. And this affects their morale.

The Russian army is trying to surround the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the ***area of Vuhledar. Near Pavlivka***, as Forbes noted, Russian troops, namely the 155th Marine Brigade, suffered the biggest losses in a single operation for a small group of elite forces since the wars in Chechnya in the 1990s.

In the southern direction, the Russians strengthened due to the mobilized and suspended the offensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. At the same time, the invaders are preparing Kherson for defense. The enemy continues to resort to looting and destruction of civilian infrastructure in the temporarily occupied territories of the Kherson region. So, on November 7, columns of trucks with household appliances and building materials moved through the dam of the Kakhovskaya hydroelectric power station. The dismantling and

removal of equipment, mobile communication towers of Ukrainian operators continues. Near the city of Beryslav, Russian invaders blew up power lines and equipment of a solar power plant. From the Kherson Regional Museum of Shovkunenko, the occupiers took out all the art treasures, furniture and equipment.

■ *Military assistance*

In the second half of October, it became known about the transfer of the following weapons to Ukraine from the partner countries:

Norway:

- Ultra-small reconnaissance UAVs Black Hornet

Finland:

- Hand grenades m/50

USA:

- 2 NASAMS complexes

Slovenia:

- 28 M-55S tanks

Czech Republic:

- Tank T-72 "Tomaš"

FRG:

- TRML-4D radar, which is the main means of detection for the IRIS-T SLM battery
- 5 Armored repair and evacuation vehicle Bergepanzer 2
- 7 heavy and medium bridge systems
- 167,000 cartridges for firearms
- 200 tents
- 195 generators
- 116,000 winter jackets
- 80,000 winter pants
- 240,000 winter hats

Lithuania:

- 7 Toyota Land Cruiser 200 armored SUVs

Italy:

- 120-mm mortars Mod. 63

EU:

- 16 Renault Trucks 4×4 D220 trucks are provided to support the medical, engineering and logistics units of the Armed Forces.

Source: Mil.ua.

■ *Russia: internal and external challenges*

1. In the second half of November, the Russian Federation once again resorted to nuclear blackmail and already traditional concept of "nuclear intimidation".¹ The Russian leadership accused Ukraine of intending to create and use a "dirty bomb". Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu even held phone conversations on this issue with French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu, Great Britain Ben Wallace, Turkish Hulusi Akar and US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. The address of the Russian minister caused irritation on the part of international partners. A joint statement by the US, France and the UK said: "Earlier today, the defense ministers of each of our countries spoke with Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu at his request. Our countries have made it clear that we all reject Russia's blatantly false claims that Ukraine is preparing to use a dirty bomb in its own territory. The world will see through any attempt to use this statement as a pretext for escalation. We also reject any pretext for escalation on the part of Russia." The countries also confirmed their unwavering support for Ukraine.

2. Unlike the governments of the partner countries, numerous pro-Russian and anti-American experts picked up on Russian propaganda. Shoigu's words were also accepted in some non-Western countries. Thus, the Indian Defense Minister called on both sides "not to resort to nuclear escalation", despite the fact that Ukraine is officially a non-nuclear state. In order to finally dispel the Russian fake, Ukraine turned to the IAEA with a proposal to conduct an appropriate investigation. As expected, the International Atomic Energy Agency found no signs of nuclear activity and materials to create a "dirty bomb."

Thus, the Russian fake was aimed at intimidating Ukraine's international partners. Vladimir Putin uses escalation tactics: first he announces mobilization against the background of heavy losses, then Russia strikes the energy infrastructure and threatens to blow up the Kakhovka Dam. Next - nuclear blackmail in the hope of splitting the West and with the help of intermediaries to force Ukraine to make peace.

3. Russian statements were made against the background of ongoing offensive actions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the South. Another fake spread by the Kremlin was the information about Russia's alleged retreat from Kherson. In fact, Russia is preparing an echelon defense and preparing for street battles in the city. This information was confirmed by the head of the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine Kyrylo Budanov. According to Budanov, the occupiers are creating the illusion that "everything is gone." And at the same time, on the contrary, they bring new military units there and prepare the streets of the city for defense. The Russians understand that if the Armed Forces take control of even the Kakhovska dam, which is now the only fully functioning transport artery, then "they will have to make a very quick decision" whether to

¹ Дмитро Дубенський Дата публікації, Чому путін з шойгу вийняли "брудну бомбу": чергова ескалація чи блеф із залякуванням, 24.10.2022,
URL: <https://telegraf.com.ua/ukr/politika/2022-10-24/5720566-chomu-putin-z-shoygu-viynjali-brudnu-bombu-chergova-eskalatsiya-chi-blef-iz-zalyakuvannyam>

leave the city very, very quickly. Otherwise, the Russian military may end up in a situation similar to that in which the Ukrainian units in Mariupol found themselves in the spring, Budanov said. "Understanding all this, they are preparing the groundwork so that, if necessary, they can get out of there very quickly. However, they are not preparing for an exit now, they are preparing for defense," concluded the head of the GUR.²

The Russians did withdraw from some positions, however, other elite troops, reinforced by a large contingent of mobilized individuals, as of beginning of November, remained at their positions, and in some places even counterattacked. Therefore, taking control of Kherson may require significant efforts on the part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

² "ЦЕ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНА ОПЕРАЦІЯ РФ": БУДАНОВ ЗАЯВИВ, ЩО РОСІЯНИ НЕ ВИХОДЯТЬ З ХЕРСОНА, А НАСПРАВДІ ГОТУЮТЬСЯ ДО ОБОРОНИ, 24.10.2022,
URL: <https://www.5.ua/regiony/tse-informatsiina-operatsiia-rf-budanov-zaiavyv-shcho-rosiiany-ne-vykhodiat-z-khersonu-a-naspravdi-hotuiutsia-do-oborony-290845.html>